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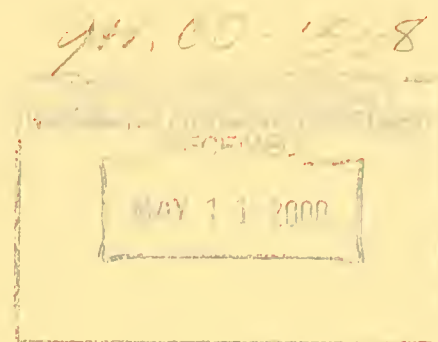
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**JUNE 9, 1997**

# **Municipal Parking Facilities**





# **Municipal Parking Facilities**

## **Introduction**

The City of Boston owns and operates 31 open air municipal parking lots. The lots are located throughout the City and are intended to meet the commercial, residential and commuter parking needs in various neighborhoods. The smallest lot is a 9 vehicle lot on Dudley Terrace used for residential parking. The largest lot accommodates 135 vehicles on Winthrop St. in Hyde Park to provide parking for the abutting commercial business district. The largest commuter lot holds 132 cars on Corey St. in West Roxbury. The maintenance and operation of the lots comes under the jurisdiction of the Parking Facilities Board, (PFB). The expense of maintaining the municipal parking lots is charged to the Parking Facilities Fund.

The Finance Commission reviewed the expenses as well as the level and method of maintenance at the neighborhood parking lots. The management of municipal parking lots is unacceptable. There have been substantial violations of the public bidding laws. Over \$1 million was paid for maintenance work since July 1, 1995, without competitive bidding. The failure to seek bids resulted in the city spending approximately \$495,000 more than it would have had the work been competitively bid. The maintenance of the lots is inconsistent. Vendors have been paid for work that was not performed. The PFB had no internal controls in place to monitor the work of its vendors. There is also no financial planning in place which will result in the Parking Facilities Fund being depleted prematurely.



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## **Major Findings of the Finance Commission**

- 1. The Parking Facilities Board spent \$594,490 in fiscal year 1996 for maintenance and repair of the municipal parking lots. The major expense was for the cleaning of parking lots by private contractors but without a public bid process;
- 2. To date in fiscal year 1997 the Parking Facilities Board has spent \$509,002 on maintenance expenses with no public bid process;
- 3. The failure to exhibit sound bidding practices and/or utilizing an in-house work force has minimally cost the City of Boston \$495,000 over the past two years;
- 4. There are no internal controls in place to insure that maintenance work paid for by the PFB was performed satisfactorily;
- 5. The lack of internal controls in some cases led the Finance Commission to conclude that contractors were paid for work that was not performed;
- 6. Due to a lack of financial planning, the Parking Facilities Fund will be depleted years earlier than should be the case.

## **Parking Facilities Board**

The Parking Facilities Board was created in 1946 under legislation that authorized the construction of public off-street parking facilities in the City of Boston. It came under the jurisdiction of the former Real Property Board for many years. When the City abolished the Real Property Department its duties were transferred to the Transportation Department.

The problems result, in part, from a lack of municipal structure. There is no oversight and the activities of the Parking Facilities Board are delegated by default to its staff. Staff salaries are charged to the Transportation Department budget but all other expenses are funded through the Parking Facilities Fund. The Parking Facilities Fund receives twenty per cent of the rental income from revenue producing parking facilities. The theory was that the income would be used to maintain and improve public off-street parking in the City of Boston. During the 1980s, when the City owned and leased several major downtown parking facilities, the fund income grew substantially. As recently as 1986, the fund balance was \$6.1 million. However, the City sold many of its parking facilities. Revenue has decreased proportionately to the point where it amounts to approximately \$400,000 annually.



## **Parking Facilities Fund**

Over \$16 million has been allocated to the Parking Facilities Fund since fiscal year 1974. During the mid 1980s the fund was receiving in excess of \$1 million per year while expenses were approximately \$200,000 each year. The fund reached its highest balance of \$6.1 millions in 1986.

The current fund balance is \$1.6 million. Unfortunately, there has been no attempt at financial planning or any effort to consider less expensive methods of cleaning municipal parking lots. Unless some checks and balances are put in place the unexpended balance in the fund will be prematurely depleted.

The following chart shows a history of revenues and expenditures over the past twenty-four years. The column heading Reserves, represents the unexpended balance on contractual agreements.

| <u>Fiscal Periods</u> | <u>Income</u>    | <u>Expended</u>  | <u>Reserves</u>    | <u>Balance</u>     |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1/73 to 6/75          | \$380,369        | \$40,552         | \$1,898            | \$337,919          |
| 7/75 to 6/78          | \$1,364,777      | \$293,787        | \$364,790          | \$1,046,017        |
| 7/79 to 6/81          | \$2,130,315      | \$1,107,549      | \$133,179          | \$2,300,394        |
| 7/81 to 6/84          | \$3,001,481      | \$498,152        | \$263,005          | \$4,673,897        |
| 7/84 to 6/87          | \$1,740,262      | \$1,612,579      | \$1,000,023        | \$4,064,562        |
| 7/87 to 6/90          | \$3,492,921      | \$3,884,766      | \$1,372,282        | \$3,300,458        |
| 7/90 to 6/93          | \$2,159,005      | \$1,824,057      | \$830,668          | \$4,177,020        |
| 7/93 to 6/94          | \$488,165        | \$852,499        | \$1,033,819        | \$3,609,535        |
| 7/94 to 6/95          | \$443,771        | \$1,266,673      | \$1,292,713        | \$2,527,739        |
| 7/95 to 6/96          | \$517,688        | \$1,118,177      | \$1,465,199        | \$1,754,764        |
| 7/96 to 3/97          | <u>\$391,305</u> | <u>\$517,799</u> | <u>\$1,453,731</u> | <u>\$1,639,738</u> |

Total Income:     **\$16,110,059**

Total Expenditures:     **\$13,016,590**

Contractual Reserves - 3/31/97:     **\$1,453,731**

Parking Facilities Fund Balance - 3/31/97:     **\$1,639,738**

Source: City of Boston Auditing Department.



**The following summarizes Parking Facilities expenditures in fiscal year 1996 and fiscal year 1997 through April 25, 1997:**

| <u>Contractor</u>                                                      | <u>specialty</u> | <u>Paid 1996</u>        | <u>Paid 7/1/96 to 4/25/97</u> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A & B Construction<br>4 parking lots                                   | lot clean up     | \$48,619.               | \$46,630.                     |
| A-N Construction<br>2 parking lots                                     | lot clean up     | \$47,064.               | \$32,885.                     |
| D & F Construction                                                     | construction     | \$12,458.               | \$998.                        |
| Dom Giannangelo                                                        | construction     | \$24,825.               | \$15,930.                     |
| Fleming Brothers<br>3 parking lots                                     | lot clean up     | \$66,540.               | \$49,465.                     |
| Greater Boston, Co.<br>2 parking lots                                  | lot clean up     | \$27,380.               | \$26,740.                     |
| Greenaway Removal<br>2 parking lots                                    | lot clean up     | \$58,770.               | \$52,640.                     |
| J & L Cleaning<br>2 parking lots                                       | lot clean up     | \$57,440.               | \$46,035.                     |
| T. C. Murphy, Co.<br>3 parking lots                                    | lot clean up     | \$21,775.               | \$36,630.                     |
| Muzzi Excavating<br>4 parking lots                                     | lot clean up     | \$74,339.               | \$45,163.                     |
| S & L Ventures<br>3 parking lots                                       | lot clean up     | \$72,860.               | \$54,365.                     |
| J. Spring Company<br>2 parking lots                                    | lot clean up     | \$32,124.               | \$34,331.                     |
| W.P. Kilroy Const.<br>4 parking lots                                   | lot clean up     | <u>\$50,296.</u>        | <u>\$67,190.</u>              |
| Total Expenditures Fiscal Year 1996 -----                              |                  | <u><b>\$594,490</b></u> |                               |
| Total Expenditures Fiscal Year 1997 -----<br>( through April 30, 1997) |                  | <u><b>\$509,002</b></u> |                               |



## Contracting Services

The Parking Facilities Board spent in excess of \$1 million over the past two years for the cleaning of municipal lots without the benefit of a public bid process. The same companies have been employed to clean the same lots for up to ten years without having to compete for the work. In addition, there were no internal controls in place to monitor the performance of its contractors. There were no inspections of work performed. Bills for work were paid with no attempt to determine the validity of the request for payment.

There are consistent violations of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30B as well as the bidding regulations of the City of Boston by the Parking Facilities Board. The law requires that any service, the cost of which is anticipated to exceed \$10,000 annually, must be obtained by competitive public bidding. That does not occur regarding the cleaning of municipal parking facilities. Every vendor performing maintenance work for the PFB was paid in excess of \$10,000 in both fiscal years 1996 and 1997 yet no bids were sought. The only bids that were sought during the past two years were for some minor repair work. The total value of that work was \$26,858 in fiscal year 1996 and one demolition job in fiscal year 1997 with a value \$4,500.

The PFB initially responded to the Finance Commission that while it did not publicly advertise its cleaning needs, that it was implementing a multi-vendor bid process for its work. It argued that such a process was appropriate because the individual jobs were under \$10,000, mostly under \$1,000. Clearly, PFB does not understand the public bidding laws. Although the multi-vendor process exists for smaller jobs, under that process vendors indicate an intent to compete for municipal work on an as needed basis. When a need arises, vendors are asked to submit informal bids on the individual jobs. That is not the process in use at PFB. The Board has employed the same contractors, in some cases for over ten years, with no attempt to seek competition for the work.

The Finance Commission has reviewed the contract and bidding issues with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Office of the Inspector General (IG). The IG concurs with our findings on these matters.

A public bid process not only complies with the law, it helps determine the value of work performed. A cost review of work performed in the municipal parking lots indicates that there are wide disparities in the amount the PFB pays to clean its lots. For example, one contractor cleans two lots in Hyde Park and one in Roxbury. Lot 11 at 1269 Hyde Park Ave contains 20 spaces with a cleaning cost of \$478.64 each week. Lot 12 located at 37 Winthrop St. provides 135 spaces and costs \$476.50 to clean per week. Lot 25 at 14 Roxbury St. contains 12 spaces and is scheduled to be cleaned six times per month at a weekly cost of \$656.65. The weekly billing cost for these lots per space is \$23.93; \$3.53 and \$54.72 for Lot 25.



One contractor is paid to clean three lots in East Boston. The lots average 32 spaces each and the average payment is \$267 per clean up, or \$8.33 per space. A second contractor cleans four lots in Roxbury that vary in size from 9 to 100 spaces each yet is paid approximately the same per lot, just under \$500. A unit price analysis indicates that the cost is \$32, \$9, \$6 and \$4 per space respectively. Three lots in Dorchester are cleaned by one contractor. They provide a total of 83 parking spaces. The cost to clean the three lots is \$1,220 or \$14.70 per space. The two municipal lots in South Boston are done by a local South Boston company. The number of spaces available is 81 with a total clean up cost of \$980 or a per space cost \$12.10.

There has been no public bidding for the maintenance of the municipal parking lots for years. As a result of that failure it is apparent that the city has expended hundreds of thousands of dollars needlessly to clean parking lots. The appropriate course of action would be to develop specifications and bid the work on a unit cost basis. A comparison could then be made of the expense of performing the work in-house. The chart on the following page breaks down the cleaning expenses on a unit basis. Unit prices for cleaning range from \$3.53 per unit space to as much as \$54.72 per unit space. Weekly cleaning expenses also vary tremendously. The expense to clean a lot at 30 Ruggles St. averages \$970 per week. A lot on Georgia St. in Dorchester costs \$910 weekly to keep clean. The city spends \$657 weekly to clean a twelve vehicle lot at 14 Roxbury St. in Roxbury and another \$662 to clean a lot on Washington St. in Jamaica Plain.

**Over the past two years if the lowest unit price was paid for the cleaning of all municipal parking lots the city would have saved \$495,000.** It is outrageous to spend over \$900 a week to clean a municipal parking lot that has forty parking spaces.

Maintenance work could also be performed through the Public Works Department. Those charged with cleaning duties in various neighborhood business districts are paid an average salary of about \$22,000 annually, with fringe benefit expense factored at an additional 30% of salary the annual cost would be almost \$29,000. Incredibly, the city could employ twenty full-time laborers for the same amount that is spent under the present system. By any reasonable standard of comparison the cleaning expense for municipal parking lots is exorbitant.



NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING FACILITIES WEEKLY CLEAN UP COSTS PER PARKING SPACE

| Lot           | Address                                    | activity<br>level | Cleaning<br>Contractor              | cleans<br>per week | spaces<br>available | avg. cost<br>per week | cost<br>per space |                  |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1             | 30 RUGGLES ST.<br>ROXBURY                  | Light             | Greenaway Disposal, Inc.            | 2x                 | 68                  | <b>\$970.00</b>       | <                 | \$14.26          |
| 2             | 398 MARKET ST.<br>BRIGHTON                 | Heavy             | Muzzi Excavating & Construction     | 1x                 | 48                  | \$332.35              |                   | \$6.92           |
| 3             | 125 A HARVARD ST.<br>ALLSTON               | Heavy             | Muzzi Excavating & Construction     | 1x                 | 66                  | \$333.03              |                   | \$5.05           |
| 4             | 40 PORTER ST.<br>EAST BOSTON               | Moderate          | T.C. Murphy, Inc.                   | 1x                 | 31                  | \$250.00              |                   | \$8.06           |
| 5             | 166-180 LONDON ST.<br>EAST BOSTON          | Moderate          | T.C. Murphy, Inc.                   | 1x                 | 37                  | \$275.00              |                   | \$7.43           |
| 6             | 737 CENTRE ST.<br>JAMAICA PLAIN            | Heavy             | Muzzi Excavating & Construction     | 1x                 | 102                 | \$391.86              |                   | \$3.84           |
| 7             | 350-352 CENTRE ST.<br>JAMAICA PLAIN        | Moderate          | Muzzi Excavating & Construction     | 1x                 | 24                  | \$321.24              |                   | \$13.39          |
| 8             | 10 TAFTHILL TERRACE<br>ROSLINDALE          | Moderate          | J. Spring Company, Inc.             | 2x                 | 92                  | \$494.80              |                   | \$5.38           |
| 9             | 711 SOUTH ST.<br>ROSLINDALE                | Heavy             | J. Spring Company, Inc.             | 2x                 | 16                  | \$485.04              |                   | <b>\$30.32</b> < |
| 10            | 39-41 COREY ST.<br>WEST ROXBURY            | M to H            | W. P. Kilroy Construction Co., Inc. | 2x                 | 132                 | \$495.80              |                   | \$3.76           |
| 11            | 1269 HYDE PARK AVE.<br>HYDE PARK           | L to M            | S & L Ventures                      | 1x                 | 20                  | \$478.64              |                   | \$23.93          |
| 12            | 37 WINTHROP ST.<br>HYDE PARK               | M to H            | S & L Ventures                      | 1x                 | 135                 | \$476.50              |                   | \$3.53           |
| 13            | 451 RIVER ST.<br>MATTAPAN                  | Moderate          | A-N Construction Corp.              | 1x                 | 48                  | \$480.00              |                   | \$10.00          |
| 14            | 23 FAIRWAY ST.<br>MATTAPAN                 | Heavy             | A-N Construction Corp.              | 1x                 | 40                  | \$477.70              |                   | \$11.94          |
| 15            | 254-258 BOWDOIN ST.<br>DORCHESTER          | Moderate          | Fleming Brothers, Inc.              | 1x                 | 19                  | \$385.00              |                   | \$20.26          |
| 16            | 8-20 BELDEN ST.<br>DORCHESTER              | None to L         | A & B Construction Co., Inc.        | 1x                 | 38                  | \$334.25              |                   | \$8.80           |
| 17            | 579-581 WASHINGTON ST.<br>DORCHESTER       | Moderate          | Fleming Brothers, Inc.              | 1x                 | 40                  | \$435.00              |                   | \$10.88          |
| 18            | 450 WEST BROADWAY<br>SOUTH BOSTON          | Heavy             | Greater Boston Co., Inc.            | 1x                 | 61                  | \$575.00              |                   | \$9.43           |
| 19            | 16 HAMLET ST.<br>DORCHESTER                | Moderate          | A & B Construction Co., Inc.        | 1x                 | 100                 | \$422.37              |                   | \$4.22           |
| 20            | 191 ADAMS ST.<br>DORCHESTER                | M to H            | W. P. Kilroy Construction Co., Inc. | 2x                 | 23                  | \$491.98              |                   | \$21.39          |
| 21            | 650-652 EAST BROADWAY<br>SOUTH BOSTON      | Heavy             | Greater Boston Co., Inc.            | 1x                 | 20                  | \$405.00              |                   | \$20.25          |
| 22            | 730-732 DUDLEY ST.<br>DORCHESTER           | Heavy             | A & B Construction Co., Inc.        | 1x                 | 9                   | \$282.66              |                   | <b>\$31.41</b> < |
| 23            | 20 GEORGIA ST.<br>DORCHESTER               | Light             | Greenaway Disposal, Inc.            | 2x                 | 40                  | <b>\$910.00</b>       | <                 | \$22.75          |
| 24            | 3087 WASHINGTON ST.<br>JAMAICA PLAIN       | Heavy             | J & L Cleaning Company              | 1.38x              | 17                  | <b>\$662.28</b>       | <                 | <b>\$38.96</b> < |
| 25            | 14 ROXBURY ST.<br>ROXBURY                  | Heavy             | S & L Ventures                      | 1.38x              | 12                  | <b>\$656.65</b>       | <                 | <b>\$54.72</b> < |
| 26            | 36 BENNINGTON ST.<br>EAST BOSTON           | Heavy             | T.C. Murphy, Inc.                   | 1x                 | 28                  | \$275.00              |                   | \$9.82           |
| 27            | 25 BLUE HILL AVE.<br>DORCHESTER            | Heavy             | W. P. Kilroy Construction Co., Inc. | 2x                 | 20                  | \$465.06              |                   | \$23.25          |
| 28            | 44 WARREN ST., Cor. ZIEGLER ST.<br>ROXBURY | Heavy             | J & L Cleaning Company              | 1.38x              | 24                  | <b>\$658.83</b>       | <                 | <b>\$27.45</b> < |
| 29            | 2196 WASHINGTON ST.<br>ROXBURY             | Moderate          | A & B Construction Co., Inc.        | 1x                 | 100                 | \$568.72              |                   | \$5.69           |
| 30            | 361-371 DUDLEY ST.<br>ROXBURY              | Moderate          | W. P. Kilroy Construction Co., Inc. | 2x                 | 33                  | \$467.14              |                   | \$14.16          |
| 31            | 629 WASHINGTON ST.<br>DORCHESTER           | Heavy             | Fleming Brothers, Inc.              | 1x                 | 24                  | <u>\$400.00</u>       |                   | <u>\$16.67</u>   |
| average costs |                                            |                   |                                     |                    |                     | <u>\$472.80</u>       |                   | <u>\$15.74</u>   |

Note: Lot 29 is owned by the Boston Redevelopment Authority but managed by the Parking Facilities Board.



## **Specific Findings**

Finance Commission staff made site visits to all 31 neighborhood facilities. There are significant differences in the condition of the facilities. Certain lots are maintained and cleaned to an acceptable level yet other lots are not cleaned on a regular basis. The Commission found and has documented proof that some vendors are paid despite the fact that no work was performed. When the Commission presented its findings to the PFB they maintained that the work was done. Their response was that weekly visits were made to every lot and it was not necessary to keep records of any visit. When the Commission informed PFB that we found uncleaned lots on specific days and/or days immediately following the date of a cleaning our findings were challenged. It was evident to the Commission that the lack of bidding, the failure to monitor work and using the same vendor to clean the same lot over time led to a level of complacency and nonperformance.

Roslindale Square. There are two City of Boston parking lots in the area. One of them is at Washington and South Streets with an adjoining small park and sitting area. A contractor was paid to sweep and clean this lot twice weekly for the past year. However, site visits conducted by the Commission's staff on January 22, 1997; February 20, 21 and 26, 1997 indicated that the lot was not cleaned. The vendor billed PFB and was paid for work it claimed to have performed on January 21 and then again for February 22 and 25.

The second facility is actually two lots. One is a small lot with space for six cars accessible to Washington Street via a staircase. The larger part of Lot 9 is across Taft Hill Terrace. The capacity is approximately 100 cars. This lot serves commuter, commercial and residential parking needs. The contractor is paid to sweep and clean this lot twice weekly and is paid \$494.80 per week. Based upon site visits on January 22, February 20, 21, and 26 it was evident that the lot was not cleaned in the manner indicated and billed by the contractor. The lot was not swept evidenced by broken glass left from week to week. PFB insists that the contractor is cleaning this facility

Allston (Harvard Ave.). This lot is behind several businesses along the stretch of Harvard Ave. beginning at Brighton Ave. The Parking Facilities Board pays a contractor to clean this lot once per week. The bills average \$335 weekly and the cleaning is performed every Thursday. On Thursday afternoon January 23, 1997 the lot was in poor condition. The contractor billed \$327.50 for cleaning that day. On Thursday, February 7, 1997 the lot was again not clean despite a bill for \$326.50 for cleaning the lot that day.



East Boston (three lots Porter St., London St. and Bennington Street). All three lots are used by business customers and for parking by area residents. Site visits were made to the three lots three to four times weekly from early February until late March, 1997. In an effort to verify if any cleaning did occur, the Finance Commission staff deposited a few items in the lots. The items remained and there was no evidence of weekly cleaning. When the Commission inquired about the level of maintenance work and the billings, the PFB was unsure of what work had been performed because it had received no bills since December, 1996. The Commission suggested that the PFB contact the vendor to determine its status. Subsequent to that the vendor submitted bills to PFB that indicated that the lots were cleaned every week and the PFB was billed accordingly.

The Commission informed PFB that its numerous site visits indicated that certain billings were not accurate. Notwithstanding the fact that PFB had no documentation to indicate any site visits were made along with the fact that no bills had been received for months, the PFB response was that our findings were misrepresented.

When questioned about its work performance, the contractor informed the Finance Commission that his crew had cleaned the lots each week, and on several occasions more than once per week.

Jamaica Plain (across from Blessed Sacrement Church). This is a small lot with spaces for twelve cars. It is primarily residential or Church related parking. The contractor bills an average \$320 for weekly cleanings that occur each Thursday. The lot was visited on Thursday, January 30, 1997 and the lot was not clean. The city was billed \$319 for cleaning the lot that day. The lot was visited six other times; on January 22 and 29 and on February 20, 25 and 28 and in March on the sixth. The condition varied each time. During January and the first half of February the lot had not been cleaned. Since being apprised of the problem by the Commission, the lot has been cleaned. The contractor informed the Finance Commission that the clean up days could vary due to weather conditions but nevertheless claimed to have cleaned the lot at least once every week.

The Finance Commission found that not only is there is an inconsistent level of cleaning services being performed by outside contractors but that some vendors were paid for work that was not performed. The response of the PFB was unbelievable. They maintained that all contractors performed the work for which they were paid, that inspections were performed and that it was an acceptable business practice to not retain any records of visits or inspections.



## Conclusions

The Parking Facilities Board's management of municipal parking facilities was found by the Commission to be deplorable. Over one million dollars was spent to clean municipal parking lots without public bids. The failure to seek competition for maintenance work resulted in the City overpaying for cleaning services by \$495,000 over the past two years. Clearly, there has been no attention paid to the management and expenses of the cleaning operation. It appears to the Finance Commission that a better cleaning job could be performed on an in-house basis by the Public Works Department. Its laborers, who perform cleaning services in various business districts, are paid an average of \$29,000 annually including benefits. A staff of twenty full-time employees could be hired to clean municipal parking lots based on the present level of expenses.

While it is important to clean and maintain the municipal parking lots the level of spending for the quality of work being performed is absurd. The financial resources being expended on municipal parking lots is unwarranted, particularly in comparison with the overall expense of cleaning the City of Boston by its Public Works Department.

The Commission found that there were no internal controls in place to insure that outside contractors performed the work for which they were paid. Incredibly, PFB and the Transportation Department maintained that there was no need to keep records of inspections. But the Finance Commission found too many incidents of work not being performed and lots not being maintained weekly and it was evident that the alleged inspections did not take place. The failure to seek public bids or set standards for work performed has resulted in wide cost ranges for services that have no relevance to the work to be done. The lack of effective management is due to years of complacency and a complete lack of oversight for the Parking Facilities operation.

The operation of the PFB and management and maintenance of municipal parking is part of the Transportation Department. But in practice it has been an entity on its own for years. Its failure to seek bids contrasts noticeably from the normal practices of the Transportation Department which does an exemplary job seeking competition for its outside work. PFB does not avail itself of other in-house Transportation Department services. The failures at PFB result from the fact that it has existed outside of the structure of a departmental organization.

Since being apprised of our findings, Transportation Commissioner John F. Magee has directed that some changes be made. Municipal lots are noticeably cleaner. Despite claiming that inspection reports were not needed they are now being done on a weekly basis with obvious results. The Commissioner has given instructions that all maintenance work must be advertised in a public bid process. However, there has been no effort to consider other methods of cleaning the municipal lots in a more cost effective manner.



## Recommendations

The management and maintenance of municipal parking lots must be reevaluated. Despite the recent changes that have been made as a result of this inquiry including the assurance that all outside work will be subject to public advertising it is evident to the Finance Commission that the Parking Facilities Board serves no useful purpose and its duties should be reassigned.

All outside contract work should be immediately halted. The vendors currently providing cleaning services are working under invalid contracts because they were not publicly bid. The best immediate course of action would be to assign the responsibility for maintaining the municipal parking lots to the Public Works Department along with the finances to support it. The cleaning requirements over the upcoming months could be performed through the summer jobs program. Mayor Menino has promoted the importance of summer jobs for young people. The Finance Commission believes that employing neighborhood youths to clean the municipal lots is a far better use of the fund than to continue the wasteful spending practices that are currently in place.

The average weekly expense for cleaning the thirty-one municipal parking lots is \$14,650. **Based on a thirty-five hour work week and a five dollar hourly salary, the City of Boston could employ over eighty young people this summer for the same amount of money currently being spent.** The City spends an incredible \$910 weekly to clean a forty space municipal lot on Georgia St. in Dorchester. Redirecting those funds alone could provide five young people with full-time summer employment.

Ultimately the Commission believes that the responsibility for maintaining the municipal parking lots should be assigned to the Public Works Department (PWD). PWD has the appropriate mix of outside vendors and in-house staff to maintain the lots throughout the year. The Finance Commission can envision a plan that would employ neighborhood youths to perform maintenance functions over the course of the year. Other necessary services such as plowing, lighting, paving etc. can be more efficiently managed by PWD.

The use of the Parking Facilities Fund should also be evaluated in an effort to preserve the fund for as long as possible. Ten years ago the fund balance was over \$6 million and today only \$1.6 million remains. Some much needed financial planning is long overdue.





